



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Elevated Levels of Lead Found in Drinking Water in Tests of Three Homes in the Town of Crested Butte But Town Water System Tests Safe.**

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**Crested Butte, Colorado - August 16, 2011-** Recent drinking water quality monitoring conducted by the Town of Crested Butte has found elevated levels of lead in drinking water in three of ten homes tested in the Town of Crested Butte.

Public Works Director Rodney Due says he has “absolutely no concern” about the Town’s water supply or drinking water because the Town’s raw water supply, prior to treatment, recently tested “well below” the maximum contaminant level for lead.

Due said the Town has been conducting tests for lead in the drinking water of ten to twenty homes in Crested Butte since 1993. According to Due, the most likely cause of the elevated levels of lead is the lead solder used in the plumbing because this was the standard type of solder used in copper plumbing in homes built prior to 1986. All ten homes tested in Crested Butte were built prior to 1989. The solder was banned in 1986. The tests for lead levels are conducted on tap water that has not been run for at least six hours.

Town officials are advising residents who may be concerned about elevated levels of lead in their drinking water to run their water for 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking to flush out lead. Lead can cause serious health problems if too much enters your body from drinking water or other sources, especially for pregnant women and children six years and younger. Lead can cause damage to the brain and kidneys, and can interfere with the production of red blood cells that carry oxygen to all parts of your body. Scientists have linked the effects of lead on the brain with lowered IQ in children. Adults with kidney problems and high blood pressure can be affected by low levels of lead more than healthy adults.

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The Town plans to include educational information about lead in drinking water in Town utility billing notices in the near future. Residents who would like more information about where they can have their water tested should Contact David Jelinek, Water System Manager, at 349-0885.

The Environmental Protection Agency suggests the following steps to reduce exposure to lead in your water:

- Run your water to flush out lead. Run water for 15-30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature before using it for drinking or cooking, if it hasn't been used for several hours. This flushes lead-containing water from the pipes.
- Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula.
- Do not boil water to remove lead. Boiling will not reduce lead.
- You may want to consider purchasing bottled water or a water filter.
- Test your water for lead.
- Get your child tested. Contact the health department or your healthcare provider to find out how you can get your child tested for lead if you are concerned about exposure.
- Identify if your plumbing fixtures contain lead.

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